

Tips for Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts

1. It is easier to discover your gift through service than to discover your service through your gift. If you haven't found your place, try serving in various ways and see what God does in you and through you!
2. Listen closely to what others say about your service. Sometimes others can see more plainly that we can that God is really involved.
3. Look at what excites and fulfills you. God often gives us great joy when we serve according to our design.

The Personality Profiles

The Otter (Proverbs 17:22) The Biblical example is Peter--sometimes speaking too quickly. The occupational stereotype is a salesman. The Otter is talkative, optimistic, funny, friendly creative and energetic, but can come across as loud, irresponsible and easily distracted. In church and in service, they like opportunities to relate. (Profiles: "I", Influencing, Sanguine, Yellow, Popular)

The Lion (1 Cor. 14:40) The Biblical example is Paul, a confident leader. The occupational stereotype is a CEO. The Lion is decisive, independent, goal oriented and outgoing, but can come across as using people, demanding and little tolerance for mistakes. The Lion needs to be well-led and to have opportunities to lead. (Other profiles: "D", Dominant, Choleric Red.)

The Beaver (Matthew 5:48) The Biblical example is Jethro, who helped Moses organize his work. The occupational stereotype is an accountant. The Beaver is analytical, conscientious, and a finisher, but can come across as pessimistic, moody, introverted, and mired in details. At church the Beaver enjoys a sermon outline, all blanks filled in. He needs a job to help organize something. (Other profiles: "C", Conscientious, Melancholy, Perfect, Blue.)

The Golden Retriever (Matthew 5:9) The Biblical example is Mary, who valued relationship over task. The occupational stereotype is a barber. The Golden Retriever is easy going, patient, kind, a good listener, is easy to get along with and is a mediator, but can come across as indecisive, resistant to change, and not goal-oriented. At church, the Golden Retriever enjoys a relaxed, informal style. He needs a job that involves building deep and lasting relationships. (Other profiles: "S", Steadiness, Phlegmatic, Lavender.)



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Starting Point

Sometimes we get frustrated with people because they don't see things the same way we do. We forget that God intentionally designed each of us differently. Our scriptures for today help us to see that there are different gifts working together in different ways toward the same goal. **What is the end goal that each gift seeks to achieve?**

How many spiritual gifts can you name? (Stop and make a list without looking inside!) Did you see any reason to the order you listed them?

This week, we'll focus on discovering our spiritual gifts, service style and personality style in order to help us see some good possible fits for ministry.

Scripture

1 Corinthians 12:1,7 (For the complete passage, read vv. 4-11.)

¹Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. ⁷Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

Ephesians 4:11-13

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹²to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Romans 12:6-8

We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

A List of 15 Spiritual Gifts

It is debated whether all spiritual gifts are recorded in God's Word and whether all those that are listed are in use by the Holy Spirit today. We've chosen a list of fifteen common gifts that do occur in Scripture, most in the following passages: Romans 12:8, Ephesians 4, and 1 Corinthians 12.

ADMINISTRATION - The spiritual empowerment to see a goal and organize people to work together toward meeting that goal. With this gift, look for jobs that include the need to organize people and things, including being a ministry director, group administrator or serving on leadership teams.

DISCERNMENT - The spiritual empowerment to distinguish right from wrong, truth from error and the source (Satan, self or God). Roles that might use this gift include counseling, leading a group, prayer, security or benevolence.

ENCOURAGEMENT (EXHORTATION) – The spiritual empowerment to lovingly motivate people to apply God's Word to their lives, especially during times of discouragement. Roles that might use this gift include work with any age group (preschool to adults), sharing testimonies, or a decision partner.

EVANGELISM - The spiritual empowerment to sense and seize God-arranged opportunities to communicate God's truth to unbelievers. With this gift you might be most fulfilled as a decision partner, doing outreach, participating in mission trips or involving your group in local mission efforts.

FAITH - The spiritual empowerment to believe God is going to provide the answers and resources needed to accomplish His will. This is a belief not only that God can, but that He will! Roles that use this gift well are prayer ministry, student ministry, counseling, church leaders and directors.

GIVING – The spiritual empowerment to contribute generously to the work of God. This person is interested in wise spending of funds and gives well beyond a tithe to God's work. This gift doesn't necessarily have a role attached, but is a blessing to all ministries.

HOSPITALITY – The spiritual empowerment to make others feel welcome, accepted and comfortable, often opening one's home to others, even possibly strangers. Roles might include anything in guest services, a home group leader or home group host, or tasks involving food service.

INTERCESSION – The spiritual empowerment to pray consistently, continually and effectively, seeing great results for the Kingdom of God. People with this gift should definitely be involved in a prayer ministry on a church or group level and use it to impact those in their lives.

LEADERSHIP - The spiritual empowerment to see God's direction and to effectively share that vision and motivate people to achieve the mission. People with this gift are effective and needed leaders in any ministry, from preschool to ushers or ministry directors.

MERCY - The spiritual empowerment to identify with the needs of other people and show God's love. It may be used loving children or ministering to adults who are ill or in need in some way. Roles may include preschool or children's ministry, benevolence, missions or support group ministry.

PROPHECY - The spiritual empowerment to communicate God's word in an persuasive way for the benefit of believers and unbelievers alike. This gift can be used preaching, teaching a group or in evangelism or missions.

SERVICE (HELPS) - The spiritual empowerment to serve others behind the scenes without recognition, setting aside personal comfort. Every ministry needs people with this gift. Consider work with preschooler or children, guest services, set-up crews, graphic design, cleaning, drivers and ushers.

SHEPHERDING (PASTORING) - The spiritual empowerment to lead a group of people by caring for their spiritual needs, nurturing them to spiritual growth. Roles that would use this spiritual gift include any position that allows you to spiritually influence people, preschool through adults: Bible study or home group leader, discipleship leader, or care group leader.

TEACHING - The spiritual empowerment to help God's people learn Godly principles for life by clearly explaining God's Word in a practical manner. Roles to look for with this gift include teaching preschool through adults: Bible study teacher, discipleship leader or substitute teacher.

WISDOM - The spiritual empowerment to understand God's perspective on decisions faced by individuals, groups or churches. Roles that make use of this gift include leadership and ministry teams, directors and group leaders.

Questions for Discussion

1. Who do you know in your group that clearly reflects one of the spiritual gifts listed above? Name someone and the gift you see.
2. If God places people in the body as He desires, why is it that every volunteer need isn't met?
3. What should we do when our church has needs that are unanswered?